

The Eclectic Theosophist

FOLLOWING THE BLAVATSKY AND POINT LOMA TRADITION

ISSUED BI-MONTHLY BY POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Subscription (6 issues)

\$2.50; foreign \$3.00

P. O. Box 6507 — San Diego, California 92106

Editors: W. Emmett Small, Helen Todd

Per Copy 50c

KATHERINE TINGLEY AS I KNEW HER

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

The following is reprinted from *Theosophia*, Spring 1979, Vol. XXXV, No. 4. This issue has a little-known front cover picture of Katherine Tingley taken in her later years. Copies of the magazine can be obtained from its editor Boris de Zirkoff, 634 South Gramercy Place, No. 301, Los Angeles, California 90005.—Eds.

July 11, 1979, will mark the fiftieth anniversary of Katherine Tingley's "passing into Light," after a long life dedicated to the service of humanity.

As is often the case with unusual people, her stature grows as her image recedes into the distant past. Misunderstood by some, violently opposed by others, misjudged by those whose materialism and ignorant conceit were challenged by her spiritual outlook on life, Katherine Tingley is slowly being recognized as an inspired leader of thought, and a witness to the undreamt of possibilities of the hidden powers in man.

The Point Loma Theosophical Center which she founded on the eve of the twentieth century, and of which she was the driving force and the inspirer, was another 'witness', in the age-old meaning of this mystical expression, to the redeeming and spiritually-constructive power of human brotherhood. Apart from being the Headquarters of a worldwide organization, it was intended to be a nucleus of a mystery-school built on the traditional lines of ancient temple schools, in which men and women who were ready in this incarnation were taught how to unlock from within themselves their inborn spiritual capacities, and how to put them into practice on lines of devoted service and unselfish endeavor within the structure of a co-operative effort in the cause of the Ancient-Wisdom.

Such an effort can be successfully started and harmoniously conducted only by an initiated disciple of esoteric knowledge, in touch with the Custodians of that knowledge, and laboring under their tutelage. Such an initiated disciple Katherine Tingley undoubtedly was, and I take this occasion to declare this as my own irrefutable conviction.

She was a powerful character, with an immense driving force, an unquenchable inspiration, a total dedication to the highest spiritual ideals, an inspiring outlook on life, on the potencies of every human being, and a disregard of the negative aspects of those whose positive qualities she incessantly fostered, and whose dormant capabilities she constantly urged into action.

She was a person of kindly and sympathetic attitude wherever these were required, and a person of great moral strength and dynamic force when such were needed. Some of her actions and plans showed rather plainly that she was able to use a power of foreknowledge not ordinarily common among men, and to rely on a thorough acquaintance with human nature gathered in previous lives. These

made it possible for her to blend into concerted action the lives of a many-sided community made up of a large number of men and women from the four quarters of the globe. This, if nothing else, was a clear evidence of spiritual leadership, as a genuine leader is a man or woman who can sense the aspirations and higher desires of others and release them to action in harmonious unity. It is relatively easy to try and impose one's own will upon ignorant followers who happen to love authority where they see it. It is far more difficult to guide the potencies of other peoples' wills into constructive spiritual and ethical channels, and to lead them into forceful and sustained action in a great and impersonal Cause. Katherine Tingley was able to do that throughout her career.

Some have attempted to convince others that she was a medium and that she was occasionally engaged in mediumistic pursuits of a kind. Only ignorant people can hold this view, those unacquainted with Katherine Tingley's character and her opinion upon such matters. In all my association with her, never once have I seen the slightest tendency towards mediumism or anything commonly associated with it. She was adamant on psychic matters, warning against the development of any psychic powers, or abnormal psychic tendencies unregulated by reason and a sound intellectual understanding. However, it is understandable that some of her spiritual qualities of foreknowledge, direct perception of certain truths, and developed spiritual intuition, would *appear* as akin to mediumism, to those whose knowledge about such things is almost nil, and whose information is usually distorted by other channels through which it had to pass before reaching them.

MEDITATIONS—13

For countless generations hath the adept builded a fane of imperishable rocks, a giant's Tower of INFINITE THOUGHT, wherein the Titan dwelt, and will, if need be, dwell alone, emerging from it but at the end of every cycle, to invite the elect of mankind to co-operate with him and help in his turn enlighten superstitious man. And we will go on in that periodical work of ours; we will not allow ourselves to be banded in our philanthropic attempts until that day when the foundations of a new continent of thought are so firmly built that no amount of opposition and ignorant malice guided by the Brethren of the Shadow will be found to prevail.

—The Mahatma Letters

Neither the personality of Katherine Tingley nor the nature and objectives of her work can ever be adequately understood and justly appraised without taking into consideration the fact that she was an initiated disciple of one of the Teachers and was often acting as a *direct agent* instructed to perform a certain task in the world, to leave a specific message for future generations of men, and to carry out a certain mandate better known to those under whose directions she worked. Unless this is taken into careful advisement, there will be misunderstandings and misjudgments as a natural result of wrong premises and distorted views.

As other direct agents of the Brotherhood of Teachers, Katherine Tingley exhibited upon occasion somewhat conflicting tendencies and characteristics which cannot be adequately explained without at least some knowledge of occult matters. This is almost invariably the case with such agents, and this fact alone, if nothing else, makes it very difficult to appraise their work, judge their actions, and assess their worth in proper relation to their surroundings and their karmic circumstances.

Agents of the Brotherhood are not mediums in the usual meaning of that term, which, as a rule, is connected in peoples' minds with one or another condition of trance. Such agents are *mediators*, in the sense of being channels—selfconsciously aware—through whom some specific teaching or work is to be conveyed, and these are sometimes different from the personal characteristics of the disciple and may be conveyed only partially or with slight modifications. Any careful study of the life of H.P.B. or of W. Q. Judge will show this with considerable clarity. They were also *mediators* of their own type and kind. As a matter of fact, the Theosophical Movement—using this term in a worldwide meaning, and without relation to any specific age or era of history—has had a number of *mediators* who worked, and work even today, under the general guidance of the Brotherhood, to the extent to which they are able to channel that guidance through their own personal natures.

One of the major achievements of Katherine Tingley, and a crowning victory of her work and training, was the fact that she was able to hand over her Torch of Light to another direct agent of the Brotherhood — Gottfried de Purucker—who in his own quality of *mediator* formulated and outlined further installments of the Esoteric Philosophy from the same ageless source of Wisdom.

Now, fifty years after Katherine Tingley's departure from our scene of action, let this brief account stand as a declaration of trust and deep appreciation from the present writer for the inestimable privilege of having been led to knowing her personally, and for the karmic opportunity of having been for some years a pupil under her tutelage and guidance. The Center which she founded and led will some day be recognized as an integral part of the Mystery-Schools, which arise and disappear temporarily, on the shifting scenes of history, as links in an endless chain of similar efforts. They stand as Witness to the never-dying Wisdom of Those who guide the faltering steps of the human race through the stages of its immaturity and its search for the Light that can illumine all life, the Present and the Past, and throw its shining beam upon the Future.

A SPIRITUAL UNITY

G. DE PURUCKER

[Those who today speak slightly of fraternization or unity among Theosophists of various groups or Societies should study history. We go back 48 years to June 1931. On the 24th of that month at the headquarters of the English Section of the T.S. (Point Loma) in London, what was called "the H.P.B. Centennial Conference" was held, attended by representatives of the different Theosophical Societies in Europe. This was the outcome of the announcement in late 1929 and early 1930 by Dr. G. de Purucker of the need for the breaking down of barriers among Theosophists worldwide, to unite in the spiritual teachings of H.P.B., and to practice the brotherhood that they preach. The centennial year of the birth of H.P.B. was seized upon to call this gathering together. (Similar meetings on August 11, 1931, were held at Point Loma, California, attended mainly by those living in the U.S.A. but open to Theosophists of all Societies; and at Adyar, India, for members of the Adyar Society). At the close of the London meeting the following cable was sent by A. Trevor Barker, the convenor of the Conference and National President of the English Section T.S. (P.L.), received on June 26 at Point Loma:

"Centennial positive success. Leader eminently satisfied. Sixty-five representative Theosophists of nineteen nationalities, four societies, including Arundales, Phoenix Lodge, fourteen executive officers national sections. Yesterday's public meeting splendid. Fine audience.

—Barker."

It would take far too long to go into the subsequent history of this movement towards friendly theosophical inter-association. The great ideal of One Theosophical Society has not been attained; but beneath the outer flow and movement of events the alchemical process of a *spiritual* unity has been growing, not with emotional fervor, but steadily, with deepening understanding, friendship, and real brotherly love amongst individual Theosophists and Theosophical groups worldwide.

We invite *Eclectic* readers to go back in thought nearly half a century when Theosophists around the world celebrated with high purpose and deep aspiration the one hundredth anniversary of their great Teacher's birth—and reflect! Following are extracts from Dr. de Purucker's closing address at that particular London H.P.B. Centennial Conference, which we reprint from *The Theosophical Forum*, Vol. III, No. 1, Sept. 1931.—Eds.]

What we want is truth. Let us therefore find that truth and follow it, which we can do in the grand original Theosophical teachings of H.P.B.; and let us remember that it was H.P.B. who collected together the first members of the Theosophical Society and gave them the key in the majestic doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion which she elaborated in her later years among us. In these words lies the reason why I am so heart-faithful to her

I have always sought truth, and that truth for me is found in the Ancient Wisdom-Religion of mankind which H.P.B. brought; and when I find individuals teaching that truth, them I call Brothers in this Work. One such was

H.P.B. That I know. One such was Judge. That I know. And one such was my great predecessor Katherine Tingley. That I know. Many here did not know her; but am I going to turn my back on those who have not felt what I have felt and known? No indeed. I am going to practice the brotherhood which I preach; and in witness thereof here is my hand in the spirit of genuine fraternity.

... The most important and most practical thing for us Theosophists to do [is] to forget the opinions and to hold to the fundamental Theosophical realities. For me, these realities are in the teachings of the Masters, and they can be found in H.P.B.'s works. Of course they are not found there merely because our beloved H.P.B. wrote them. If any individual person had written them, the truths would be the same. It so happens, however, that I love H.P.B. because she was H.P.B.; but, after all, that is my own affair. I can easily see that there are many who could not, at any rate who would not, understand H.P.B. as I see her and understand her, but am I going to condemn such because they differ from me in views and in feeling concerning H.P.B.?

Another thing: I do not think it a practical method for bringing about our working together, my Brothers, merely to sit together at a table in a brain-mind way and in a brain-mind way seek brain-mind points of agreement. That method has been tried so many scores, indeed hundreds, of times, and has always failed, for it invariably leads into discussions which in their turn will lead to argument, which again leads only to wounded feelings and further causes of misunderstandings, concerning what Timothy Dexter or G. de P. or Dr. Besant, or some other prominent Theosophist, thinks to be 'an essential'. I think that such brain-mind methods are worse than futile; I think that they are dangerous. Isn't it much better to be practical than to follow the methods which have proved their impractical and futile and dangerous character? If we Theosophists cannot unite on the basis of the spiritual and intellectual verities which we have from the Teachers, and which we all know that we accept, we cannot unite and remain united merely by subscribing in a brain-mind way to a list of Articles of Belief, which as individual teachings all of us already accept. Why not, instead of doing this, unite in our love of and belief in H.P.B. as the Masters' Messenger.

In the future, and I see it clearly — no, not by any psychic vision, I do not indulge in that—but my logic, my instinct, my spiritual feeling, tell me that in the future the Theosophical Movement will be once more a unified organism, somewhat changed it may be from what it was in the days of our beloved H.P.B., but with her teachings as the foundation of its life and its activity, and with the same policy guiding its destiny. I yearn to see this accomplished in my own lifetime, if I can bring it about. This basis of mutual understanding and of a common fellowship I do not want to have written, I do not want to see it set forth in black and white on paper. I want it based on the mutual understanding and tacit acceptance of genuine Theosophists and honest men, and to have it clearly understood that any man, or any one of the component Theosophical Societies, will be free to withdraw from such

association at any moment when it should please them to do so. I yearn to see this Spiritual Brotherhood that I speak of composed of all the Theosophical Societies in the world, and all working together for a common end, confessing by their action of unification and by the doctrines which they teach that they believe in the brotherhood which they preach.

This is not an unattainable ideal which lies beyond the bounds of possibility. It is easily to be brought about, and by the only way which is practical and practicable: Change men's hearts and minds to forget the opinions which they cherish so dearly, and to consent to work on the basis of the essential spiritual realities of life which we all acknowledge as fundamental, essential Theosophy. That is what I want, and I believe that the members of the Adyar Society and that the members of the United Lodge of Theosophists and that the members of all the various different Theosophical bodies, all have pretty much the same hope and ideal latent in their souls. I know that they all feel that they are working for genuine Theosophical principles, and I hope that I am large-hearted enough and broad-minded enough to realize that they have as much right to their opinions and feelings as I have to mine; and I hope that they are broad-minded enough to know that we all are brothers, fellow-Theosophists, every Society having its own difficulties, its own problems, and its own line of work in the world.

Do you know that the Path to the Heart of the Universe is different for every living entity, and yet that all those paths merge into One? Each man must tread his own evolutionary path, which in the world's foolish view means that in his ordinary brain-mind way each man must hold fast to his own opinions. But verily this is a mistaken view. Opinions! It is opinions that separate men in politics, in religion, in all the ordinary affairs and avocations of human life. It is so, alas, even in our own Theosophical Movement; it is so in religious and philosophical societies everywhere. Men worship opinions instead of realities.

I know indeed that all these various Theosophical Societies have their respective and differing opinions; but I also know that each one is pursuing its own line of work and is, I believe, trying to do good in the world; and I also know that each one of them, as well as every individual composing their respective fellowships, is following its own pathway to the Heart of the Universe. Let us then remember this great truth. It will bring generosity into our hearts and a kindlier feeling for those who differ from us.

I will now close, with the expression of the hope that this will not be the last meeting of its kind. Our gathering is an historic event, believe me, Brothers, in the history of the modern Theosophical Movement. I know that if these thoughts which I have attempted so poorly this afternoon to lay before you, are understood, and accepted in your hearts—in other words if your minds and hearts will run parallel with them—we shall have taken a great step forwards towards the accomplishment of that Universal Brotherhood of humanity which the Masters have set before us as the main work of the Theosophical Society; and I remind you of a great truth which I will quote for you in the words of the ancient Vedic sage:

*Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi
Dhiyo yo nah prachodayât.*

which we may translate and paraphrase as follows:

"Oh, thou golden sun of most excellent splendor, illumine our hearts and fill our minds, so that we, recognizing our oneness with the divinity which is the Heart of the Universe, may see the pathway before our feet, and tread it to those distant goals of perfection, stimulated by thine own radiant light."

This is a paraphrase of the Savitrî, perhaps the most sacred verse in the ancient Hindû scriptures, and it contains a world of truth, for it sets forth the spiritual oneness of all things that are—that all things are rooted in the spiritual Universe, nay, more, in the Boundless: that in THAT we forever move and live and have our being; and that our whole duty is so to live, which means so to feel and so to think and so to act, that day by day and year by year we may recognize this fundamental oneness with the Cosmic Heart, and manifest its supernal glory and strength in our own lives.

(The Conference closed with a few moments of Silence after seven strokes on the gong.)

"THE FIRST FAINT VIBRATIONS OF THIS GREAT SOUND"

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Perhaps the most historically interesting chapter in Dara Eklund's compilation of Volume II of *Echoes of the Orient* is that reporting the contributions of W. Q. Judge at the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893, Sept. 15-16-17. We quote (from *The Path*, Vol. VIII, Nov. 1893, pp. 247-49) parts of the summary of theosophical events at this great Congress, as they may prove of interest to our readers, especially those acquainted with Vol. I of *Echoes*. They may also like to know the chapter titles of the new volume, which will be published later this year by Point Loma Publications, Inc. (price to be announced later; price of Vol. I is still \$10.00): Articles from: 1. *The Irish Theosophist*; 2. *Lucifer*; 3. *The Theosophist*; 4. World's Parliament of Religions; 5. Selections from *The Path*; 6. Hidden Hints in the S.D.; 7. *The Vahan*; 8. Questions and Answers from *The Theosophical Forum*; 9. Questions from *The Path*; 10. Abridgment and Discussions; 11. Faces of Friends (biographical sketches and portraits).—Eds.

The Congress of the Theosophical Society in September as a part of the Great Parliament of Religions was a significant as well as successful event. In another article the Chicago Chairman shows how we had but little hope at first of having any place whatever in either the merely intellectual or the religious side of the World's Fair; how we found the old yet senseless opposition to Theosophy obstructing the path for so long as to cause us to cease efforts; and how suddenly the scene changed and the managers of the Parliament of Religions became our friends and helpers. This change will never be explained by those who do not know the forces working behind the acts and thoughts of men. It not only took us into the Parliament, but gave us the best date of all sittings and made our Congress the real Parliament itself.

Not at any time but now during eighteen centuries could such a meeting have been possible, and it was distinctly a Theosophical step because, being an effort to get on one platform representatives of all religions, it was just what our Society had been accomplishing steadily during the past

eighteen years, and what our objects and constitution have always expressed: . . .

Our part in the Parliament was not merely to prove that the Society had grown strong enough and sufficiently respectable to compel a place therein, but chiefly to show, as an integral portion of the whole body, that the true attitude for all religious bodies to take is to seek for and disclose the truths in each, and not confine themselves merely to their own pet theories. And as we exemplified this in truth, the other bodies confining themselves to explications of particular creeds or views of salvation—and one, the Roman Catholic, declaring that only in that sort of Christianity were truth, ethics, and salvation—it follows that the Theosophical Congress was in actuality, though not in form, the Parliament of Religions.

The occasion enabled us to present a great object-lesson illustrating what we had been saying for years, that the Oriental is no heathen, that he should not be treated as such, and that an examination of his religions will show them to be the real source of those professed by the Occident. And when all those Greeks, Chinese, Japanese, Buddhists, Shintos, Hindus, and Confucians appeared on the platform, beyond doubt the Brahman we brought towered above them all by virtue of the ancient system he represented as prime source of all religions. Our Buddhist Dharmapala, with Annie Besant an old agnostic, combined with all others proved that the Theosophical movement, though small by comparison with the world's great set systems of religion, voices the great underlying note of the mental, moral, and religious evolution of the human race. This note is changed, distorted, and colored by any and every form of religion, but in Theosophy it sounds forth without fault. No one religion gives it clearly, no single system will present it to the perception; only by the combination and from the examination of all can it be discovered for the delight and benefit of humanity.

And that the minds of Western people are beginning to hear the first faint vibrations of this great sound was evident at our Congress. All our meetings were crowded to overflowing,* every shade of opinion was on our platform as well as in our audiences, and, recognizing the effect produced by such an epoch-making Congress as ours, the newspapers of the city, which only attend to that which forces itself to the surface, gave us in their reports the greatest prominence, saying one day, "The Theosophical Congress is a competitor of the whole Parliament."

But remembering the words of our old teacher, the Master's Messenger—H.P.B., that it may be dangerous for the T.S. to grow too fast, out of proportion to its strength, let us one and all try to make ourselves centers for Theosophical influence, so as to constitute a body of power from the power of each element duly fostered and educated. This we shall do only by personal effort, by attention and by service to others; and thus, and in no other way, we may reap for the Theosophical Society all the benefits that such a congress and such success should justly lead us to expect.

*At the meeting Mr. Judge addressed at 8 p.m. in the Hall of Washington, 3,500 crowded in to hear him.—*Eclectic Eds.*

AND WE QUOTE . . .

Ethics

The Ethics of Theosophy are more important than any divulgement of psychic laws and facts. The latter relate wholly to the material and evanescent part of the septenary man, but the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man—the reincarnating Ego.

—H. P. Blavatsky to the 4th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, American Section, April 27-28, 1890.

Visitation

Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Visit the soul in sleep—that death is slumber,
And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber
Of those who wake and live.

—Shelley, "Mont Blanc"

Our Two Selves

Behind every man's external life that he leads in company, there is another which he leads alone, and which he carries with him apart. We see but one aspect of our neighbor as we see but one side of the moon; in either case there is a dark half which is unknown to us. We all come down to dinner, but each has a room to himself.

—Henry James: Introduction to *The Private Life*

And Plunge

Life flows by like a river. The same water will not come to you again; it is gone forever. So it is with opportunities; we have to seize them the moment they present themselves or they vanish. The great river of life flows strongly and continuously but sometimes it would seem that we are content to travel in canals away from the mainstream of the river, slowly from lock to lock. We may, indeed, become attached to one particular lock for we feel a certain security within its bounds and we have a certain mastery over it for it is small in comparison with the river. We are timid of leaving it and afraid to plunge into the river of life itself, but it is only in the free-flowing river that a transformation can take place. It is pure cowardice to lurk in the locks. Let us dare to move out and plunge into the unknown, into the unexpected, into something which, perhaps, you have not been able to imagine before. Once you have left the springboard, you leave it—you don't take it with you. Or it is like crossing a crevasse on a glacier—the only thing to do is to jump. You have to launch out boldly or you will never get to the other side—there is no other way. I think life now and again offers us challenges of this sort and we must meet them unafraid. We must be trusting enough to plunge into the river.

—John B. S. Coats, addressing the 103rd Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, Varanasi, December 1978, reprinted from *The Theosophist*, March, 1979.

Ammonius Saccas—"Theodidaktos (divinely taught)"

The disciples of Ammonius were given various names associated with their activities, but perhaps the most significant was Philaletheans—friends of truth—because they were open to wisdom wherever it might be found. They were also

known as ecstasies because they sought, through meditation, union in consciousness with the ineffable source that transcends all limitations of form and matter. Ammonius called his spiritual philosophy Eclectic Theosophy, for he sought divine wisdom in all the traditions that preserved it in their veiled doctrines and unsullied fragments of truth. Ammonius died towards the middle of the third century, but he was survived by his school in Alexandria. It endured until the early fifth century and the depredations of Theophilus and St. Cyril, the murderer of Hypatia. In Rome, through the school of Plotinus, and in Athens, through the revitalized Academy under Neo-Platonists such as Proclus, the teachings of Ammonius continued to leaven the Mediterranean world until the early sixth century. Then through the zealous sectarianism of Justinian, the Academy was closed and its properties confiscated. The last seven wise men of the Orient, the remnant group of the Neo-Platonists, departed to Persia and India, and the reign of wisdom ended. The Philaletheans were no more and the sacred Books of Thoth-Hermes had no interpreters in Christian Europe.

—"Ammonius Saccas", in *Hermes*,
June 2, 1979, Vol. V, No. 6

Ian Stevenson On Reincarnation

Reprinted from 'On the Lookout' in *Theosophy*, June 1979, published by The Theosophy Company of Los Angeles.

Journalistic treatments of the subject of reincarnation grow increasingly respectful as the years go by. This may be attributed to the fact that more and more people are taking it seriously as an explanation of some of life's mysteries, and by reason of this interest those who have had experiences suggestive of reincarnation are less reluctant to say what they think. Another factor of importance in the spreading interest in rebirth is the scholarly work of Dr. Ian Stevenson, who is chairman of the department of psychiatry in the medical school of the University of Virginia. Dr. Stevenson's books are becoming well known, and he is increasingly sought out by reporters in quest of interesting material. Telling about an interview with this psychiatrist in the *New York Post* for Nov. 18, 1978, a writer, Tom Zito, says:

"While reincarnation conjures up images of quackery to many, the topic does have a history of serious intellectual consideration. Greek philosophers pondered it, Nobel Prize winners studied it, and Darwin pushed the issue into Western thought. In the East, reincarnation is as acceptable as the American Express card.

And even in this great land of civics, Stevenson is being approached more seriously—both by his colleagues and, more immediately, by the individuals who write him."

Dr. Stevenson, this writer says, is "mostly interested in cases involving young children who claim to have had a previous life, especially when the child spontaneously offers evidence of this previous personality in his conversation."

Commenting on the present surge of wondering about former existences, the psychiatrist said to the reporter:

"Twenty years ago there would never have been an office like this on a campus, and I'm fascinated by the letters of support I get that say: 'I wish I had known about your research years ago. When Billy was 3, he used to prattle on about being a pilot and shot down and now he's 10 and doesn't remember anything'!"

The frequency of such reports becomes of particular interest in view of H.P.B.'s statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 303) that "save in the case of young children, and of individuals whose lives were violently cut off by some accident, no Spiritual Entity can reincarnate before a period of many centuries has elapsed." In *Isis Unveiled* (I, 351) she gives further explanation of such cases of rapid reincarnation, remarking that the same "astral monad" is reborn after a death by violence. This would perhaps explain the memory of the preceding life on the part of the child, since the astral body is the same. Dr. Stevenson provided another case to the interviewer:

"My 9-year-old son talks frequently of another life in which he died at the age of 27 in an auto accident," a woman writes from upstate New York. "His description of death and rebirth is matter-of-fact and without dramatics. Until now, I have not encouraged a full discussion of the subject, as I do not know how to handle it. Of his supposed former life, he knows his name, his parents' names and their occupations, where he lived and how he died. His story does not vary except for small details. He insists he was 'told' to choose his father and me as his parents'."

The *Post* writer notes that other professionals working in the field of mind are showing a particular interest in Dr. Stevenson's research. The editor of the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, in which several of Stevenson's papers had appeared, said that he received "three or four hundred requests for reprints from scientists in every discipline." The psychiatrist combines a rigorously impartial approach to the possibility of reincarnation, while at the same time recognizing its great potentiality as an explanation of psychological puzzles. He said to the *Post* reporter:

"There are so many features of human behavior that aren't adequately explained by current psychological theories. Childhood fears: the fear of airplane motors in one infant, who would be lying out in the sun and become excited and cries when a plane passed overhead; or fear of water, in a baby that would scream and yell when being bathed before it could even speak."

"So, one might surmise, one baby had been killed in an airplane crash in a previous life, and the other drowned?"

"Not that simple," Stevenson replies, but we can make fascinating correlations. A case I'm studying in Alabama. A young boy 10 or 12 was playing in a house with a friend. The friend pointed a loaded gun at him and shot him accidentally. Another boy born shortly after

that named the boy who had shot the other one, described the boy's house and gave an account quite rich in detail of his previous personality." The persuasiveness of such evidence can hardly be ignored.

How is it that, in a brief hundred years, the conception of rebirth has become so common? At least two factors have been at work. First, there are the egos who have taken birth during the twentieth century—souls who may have had clear recognition of the universal process of rebirth in former lives, and now have little difficulty in bringing this idea through. A further consideration is the spread of Theosophical ideas. Reincarnation is frequently referred to in the literature of recent decades. For example, Thornton Wilder, a novelist who gained fame with *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*—often referred to by students of Theosophy as a study of the workings of Karma—published another novel in 1967, *The Eighth Day*, in which reincarnation is expounded as a teaching by one of the characters. In this scene, two young men who work as orderlies in a large hospital are conversing:

"It was Bogardus's day on duty there. He walked back and forth smoking long brown cigarettes . . .

"Trent," he said 'all men lead as many lives as there are sands in the Ganges River.'

"Roger waited. Finally he had to ask, 'What do you mean, Pete?'

"We are born again and again. These three men here—look at them! . . . They will be dead in a few hours . . . they will be born again. And they will be born again hundreds of thousands of times . . .

"There's a mighty ladder, boy. In each new life a man may acquire merit that will permit him to step up a rung or two, or he may fall into error and slip back. Through the merit of Gautama Buddha himself and those who have followed him all men tend to rise. Finally, when they have lived as many lives as the sands of the Ganges, they will arrive at the threshold of supreme happiness. But—now mark my words!—arrived at that threshold, these men will not step over it. They will deny themselves supreme happiness. They will continue to be reborn. They will choose to wait until all men have reached that threshold—men as numerous as the sands of the Ganges—many of them cruel and wicked men. They move about among us now, in disguise, aiding us to ascend that mighty ladder. But even when all the men on this earth, as many as are the sands of the Ganges, have reached that threshold none of them will step over it into supreme happiness, for there are other inhabited stars, as many as the sands of the Ganges. We must wait until all the men on all the stars have purified themselves. No man can wish to be happy until everyone else in the universe is happy'."

Despite what might seem poetic extravagance, the idea of the Promethean or Bodhisattvic sacrifice is clearly conveyed. By such means the idea of the path of Reincarnation is helped to become a common intuition of the race.

Book Reviews

THE CATHARS AND REINCARNATION, by Arthur Guirdham. A Quest Book, The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois,

This book reads like a novel structured with plot, subplot, good and evil characters; struggle and violence; loyalties to religious beliefs (the Cathars); persecution by the establishment (Inquisition); peasant girl and the aristocrat; romantic troubador songs; tragedy and a love that is remembered after seven hundred years.

The narrative involves the psychiatrist-author and his patient who has had vivid dreams and nightmares from childhood and fears she may be going mad. Both are English but they find that the locale of the dreams is in France. The psychiatrist who has an affinity for parts of France, particularly the east Pyrenees, recognizes in his patient a psychic development. He treats her sympathetically and discovers that they both often have concurrent thoughts and revelations about the 13th century, the time when most of the dream adventures of the patient took place. She digs into her school-girl notebooks and records and brings forth excerpts from dreams and parts of Old French and Languedoc poetry she has faithfully recorded. Scholars specializing in medieval history of France, particularly of the Cathar heretical era, verify places, date, and the names of persons in the dreams. The psychiatrist believes his patient is clearly seeing her former life as she lived it in the 13th century. Early on she 'recognizes' him as 'Roger', her lover and religious activist of the Cathar era of persecution by the Inquisition. After this discovery she suffers no more migraine headaches. With more confidence in herself she goes to France to Toulouse, Sarcassonne, and other towns. The doctor 'proves' through his research and consultations with authorities knowledgeable in Cathar history. The poetry, which he translates himself, is mostly composed of troubador songs often shot through with religious fervor. (The troubadors had a 'mystic' relationship with the Cathars, an intensely religious early Christian sect having both men women as their priests—*parfaits* and *parfaites*. They were condemned as heretics and barbarously persecuted by the Inquisition.)

The author emphasizes the splendid accuracy of both time and place of events in French *moyen* history as revealed in his patient's communications to him and the dependability to be placed on them. But to an American history buff there is one glaring inaccuracy the lady referred to (page 56) when she speaks of the assassination of President McKinley in 1867. President McKinley was assassinated in 1901, not 1867. The book eminently stimulates an interest in the brave Cathars and their beliefs in the Middle Ages. Whether it proves a bona fide former incarnation of a currently living person it seems to me only a Seer would know.

A copious bibliography appears at the book's end, mostly in French by French authors. It is a pity that more of this source material has not been translated into English or written about by English authors. Dr. Guirdham deserves praise for his research into Catharism and his enterprise in writing of it.—JALIE N. SHORE.

SEARCH AND FIND. Theosophical Reference Index (following the Blavatsky Tradition), compiled by Elsie Benjamin. Published by Point Loma Publications, Inc., San Diego, California. 155 pp. \$3.95.

Mrs. Benjamin started her Theosophical Reference Index in 1929, when she was secretary to Dr. de Purucker at Point Loma, and she has added continuously to it since. The existence of this Index has been known for years to readers of the Corresponding Fellows Lodge *Bulletin*, which she has edited since 1945; references to it in that journal have prompted many a suggestion that it be shared with other students of Theosophy, and it follows that Point Loma Publications, Inc. will accrue much gratitude for their initiative in publishing it.

The masthead of the CFL *Bulletin* carries the banner, "Following the Blavatsky Tradition", and it is not surprising that *Search and Find* is faithful to this practice. The references are mostly from the *Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*; the writings of Blavatsky, Judge and de Purucker; together with a number of other compatible sources.

No index lends itself to a review. Let me then cite a couple of reactions to *Search and Find*. A friend, browsing through my copy, cried, "This is wonderful: if only there was more of it!" Another friend, after receiving his copy, told me that a single intriguing entry had been worth the price of the book to him.

Search and Find is not complete, of course. Such a project goes on and on. Its virtues, apart from the general fascination of its contents, lie in its selective, uncluttered compilation, and that it can be utilized as the foundation of anyone's personal Theosophical Reference Index. The publishers have thoughtfully provided a generous number of blank pages—there is one after each letter of the alphabet—so that a student can just carry on adding references.

—TED G. DAVY in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Jan.-Feb. 1979.

LIFE'S RIDDLE by Nils A. Amneus. Thomas Amneus, 2440 Yosemite Drive, Los Angeles, California 90041, 1975. Pages viii, 256, \$5.25. Also from Point Loma Publications, Inc.)

The ancient teachings related to the many riddles of life such as the purpose of life, death and its meaning, man—his nature and evolution, free will and destiny, etc. have existed in all ages and in all countries. Theosophy is a representation of that Wisdom to the twentieth century man. The book under review introduces the reader to the principles that underlie that Wisdom, the understanding of which reveals that man 'is not a helpless pawn ruled by blind forces but that he has the power of choice and freedom of action and is therefore responsible for his acts'. It also affirms that brotherhood is a fact in nature based on the inner unity of all life—a fact which is corroborated by presentday scientific findings. One can also find answers to many other riddles: Is this a haphazard universe governed by blind forces, or is there a plan behind it? Why do we not remember our past lives? Why is there so much suffering in the world?

Written in a lucid style, this book (first printed in 1945 and now republished as a paperback) will certainly help

the many who, in their quest to find the right answers to Life's riddles, are often led along dangerous and pseudo-occult paths.

—SEETHA NEELAKANTAN, *The Adyar Library Bulletin*, Vol 41.

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

Mora Forbes, Emsworth, England.—I remember writing to Katherine Tingley when I was six years old asking to go to Point Loma. I started with her Lotus Group at 19 Avenue Road (London) when I was four. Point Loma meant a lot to me, as I think it did to many. I have never got over the fact that it had to end as a physical place. I had always thought of P.L. in the West and Adyar in the East, and K.T. always spoke of San Diego as the Athens of the West. In my days at P.L. I lived closely with *Letters That Have Helped Me* by Judge, and *The Path of the Mystic* by K.T. As I said to Pearl [Kramer—her sister, who also lived at Point Loma], no one reading her words could doubt she belonged to the Brotherhood.

On the day K.T. died (July 11, 1929) I wrote a few lines. I quote here just a few: "I could hardly believe the news . . . Mme. Tingley seemed so near, the whole atmosphere seemed infused with her presence; it seemed that her great heart had burst and that she was everywhere . . . The day is so beautiful, breezes and sunshine and gentle whisperings in the trees. I wonder what they are saying. . . . When I went up to offer my flowers, a feeling of deep reverence surrounded me, and the words "Love and Gratitude" rose from my lips. It feels such a day of peace today, and happiness in spite of our loss.

William J. Pierce, Elverson, Pa.—Each issue of *The Eclectic Theosophist* keeps shedding a new light on our path down the road of life. The enclosed card, I am sure you will agree, would help many if only they would open their eyes and their minds and *think*, for life is not a hopeless affair. [The postcard read as follows]: "The body of B. Franklin, Printer, Like the Cover of an old Book, Its Contents worn out, and stripped of its Lettering, Lies here, Food for Worms. But the Work shall not be lost; For it will, as he believ'd, appear once more In a new and more elegant Edition Corrected and Improved By the Author.—[And in smaller letters]: (This epitaph, written by Franklin as a young man, was not intended to be used. His nearby gravestone was prepared in exact accordance with the instructions contained in his will.) [Then this]: This gravesite restored by the Poor Richard Club of Philadelphia through the generosity of Howard C. Story in memory of his parents Edward A. and Mary Elizabeth Story."

ITEMS of INTEREST

Correction

Selling price for the verbatim reprint of the first volume of *The Theosophist* is \$9.95 (not \$8.95 as stated in Eclectic No. 52). Orders may also be placed with Miss Leona Sterba, 1528 S.W. 26, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73108, who is a major distributor.

A Textbook of Theosophy

In *The Theosophical Journal*, March/April 1979, Ianthe H. Hoskins, under the above title writes: "Early in our acquaintance with theosophical thought, we meet the teaching of reincarnation. It is an obvious title for one chapter in the Textbook we are compiling." Then follows itemized suggestions for the study of this particular subject. The idea of a practical textbook along these lines printed in the *Journal* should prove most stimulating. Interested readers are referred to the above mentioned and future issues (The Theosophical Society in England, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ).

A New Study

The Way to the Mysteries is Chapter I of a new study by L. Gordon Plummer currently appearing in *The Canadian Theosophist*. This first chapter is on "The Coming of the Mystery-Schools."

From Italy

Damodar, the Master for the Age of Aquarius by Luca Mameli and Donatella Morelli, recently off the press of Edoardo Bresci, Via A. Vespucci, 41 Torino, Italy, is No. 18 of their Editions of the Age of Aquarius. Paper, 96 pp. They also have published *Damodar and the Pioneers of the Theosophical Movement* by Sven Eek (The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, India), *Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom*, transcribed and annotated by C. Jinārdāsa (also TPH), and *The Masters and Genuine Occultism* by G. de Purucker (Point Loma Publications, Inc. *The Mahātmās and Genuine Occultism*).

YOU CAN HELP!

Some people do want to work for Theosophy but need direction. Here is a suggestion. Visit your bookstores. Talk to the proprietor or those in charge of sales. Bring some special Theosophical book and ask if it would interest his clientele. We will furnish you with booklists. We do not have paid sales people. Be a spokesman yourself. Remember it is not just advertising: it is getting *Ideas*, theosophical ideas, out to people who need them. Drop P. L. Publications a line. Wherever you are you can help!

CONTRIBUTIONS

Since our last report the following contributions have been received, acknowledged here with grateful thanks: Anon., \$100.00; R.H., \$20.00; T.H., \$5.00; M.N., \$5.00; T.A., \$50.00; D.L.G., \$15.00; M.N., \$10.00; E.M.G., \$500.00; R.H., \$10.00; and from C. F. Lodge, Worthing, those attending recent "Garden Party" Convention there, \$102.00. And in memory of Iverson L. Harris: A.E., \$20.00; D.B.v.d.S., \$25.00; H.&E.G., \$25.00.